

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY PORT AU PRINCE IMMEDIATE

UNCLAS CARACAS 8065

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EO 11652 NA

SUBJ: AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S DEPARTURE PRESS CONFERENCE

SIMON BOLIVAR INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT CARACAS AUG 13, 1977

USUN FOR IOP USIA FOR ILA AND IOP/M

FOLLOWING IS TRANSCRIPT OF AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S PRESS CONFERENCE
AT TIME OF DEPARTURE FROM CARACAS

Q. FOR THOSE OF YOU WHO DON'T KNOW ME, I AM GUMERSINDO VILLASANA
OF EL UNIVERSAL. I WOULD LIKE TO ASK MR YOUNG WHETHER THIS VISIT
TO LA WILL ALLOW THE US TO EXPAND ITS POLICY TOWARDS LA AND
THUS ALLOW CONGRESS TO EXPAND ALSO ITS OWN VISION OF COOPERATION
WITH LATIN AMERICA.

A. I THINK THAT WHEN YOU PUT MY VISIT IN THE CONTEXT OF PREVIOUS
VISITS BY MRS CARTER, BY ASSST SECRETARY TODMAN AND ALSO
VISITS THAT WERE NOT PUBLICIZED BY MANY OF OUR OFFICIALS IN
THE AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, THAT YOU CAN SAY THAT
WE HAVE ALREADY BEGUN A NEW APPROACH TO LA, AND YOU'RE QUITE
RIGHT THAT PERHPAS THE CONGRESS IS NOT TOTALLY UP TO DATE WITH
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THIS APPROACH; BUT I THINK THAT THE FIRST TEST OF INVOLVING
THE CONGRESS IN THIS APPROACH IS THE RATIFICATION OF THE PANAMA
CANAL AGREEMENT BY THE SENATE AND THERE IS SOMUCH AT STAKE
THERE FOR THE WHOLE HEMISPHERE, I THINK THAT DISCUSSIONS OF THAT
AGREEMENT WILL DEMONSTRATE TO ALL THE PEOPLE OF THE US THE
IMPORTANCE TO THE US OF THE CARIBBEAN BASIN

INTERPRETER: THE NEXT COLLEAGUE IS FROM THE NEWSPAPER EL NACIONAL.

Q. IT IS SAID THAT TRIPS WHICH FOLLOW SUCH A FULL ITINERARY, WITH SUCH SHORT STOPOVERS IN EACH SITE, DO NOT ALLOW ENOUGH TIME FOR A CLOSE EXAMINATION OF THE SITUATION IN EACH COUNTRY, AND THEREFORE RUNS CONTRARY TO THE PURPOSE OF SUCH TRIPS. QQWHIUSYXKCMVPCCVMN OF THIS-- IS YOUR TRIP AN EXCEPTION?

A. NO IT'S NOT. BUT I THINK THAT WHAT'S IMPORTANT FOR ME TO FIND OUT AS A REPRESENTATIVE OF THE US GOVT IS THE THINKING OF THE GOVT OF VENEZUELA. AND I THINK WE HAVE HAD VERY SIGNIFICANT AND SUBSTANTIVE TALKS WITH PRESIDENT PEREZ AND FOREIGN MINISTER CONSALVI AND A BROAD CROSS-SECTION OF THE GOVT OF VENEZUELA. IT'S REALLY NOT NECESSARY FOR ME TO BE THOROUGHLY FAMILIAR WITH THE POLITICS OF VENEZUELA, TO GET TO KNOW THE PEOPLE OF VENEZUELA-- AS MUCH AS I'D LIKE TO-- AND AS MUCH AS I REGRET NOT HAVING HAD THIS OPPORTUNITY. I THINK THE ULTIMATE TRAGEDY OF THIS TRIP IS THAT I'VE BEEN IN SOME OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WATERS OF THIS WORLD AND WE HAVE YET TO SEE A BEACH. BUT WE HAVE SEEN THE PRESIDENTS, THE FOREIGN MINISTERS, THE MINISTERS OF FINANCE AND WE HAVE HAD AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SERIOUS DISCUSSIONS ABOUT THE RELATIONSHIPS THAT EXIST BETWEEN OUR GOVT AND THE GOVTS OF THE COUNTRIES WE VISITED.

Q. I'M BUSTAMANTE, REPORTER FROM THE NATIONAL TV NETWORK. GOOD MORNING, MR AMBASSADOR. I WOULD LIKE TO ASK TWO QUESTIONS.
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FIRST OF ALL, WHAT IS THE MAIN DIFFERENCE, OR DIFFERENCES, BETWEEN PRESENT US FOREIGN POLICY AND PAST FOREIGN POLICY? AND THE SECOND QUESTION IS WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF YOUR CONVERSATIONS WITH THE GOVT HERE AND MAINLY THE TALKS YOU HAD THIS MORNING?

A. I THINK THE DIFFERENCE MAY BE THAT IN THE PAST WE HAD NO POLICY AND NOW WE'RE TRYING TO DEVELOP ONE. THAT MAY BE A LITTLE TOO CRUEL, BUT I THINK, ESSENTIALLY FROM ABOUT 1964 TO 1976, US FOREIGN POLICY ESSENTIALLY WAS A VIET-NAM POLICY AND AN EAST WEST POLICY AND WE IGNORED OUR NEIGHBORS TO THE SOUTH ALMOST COMPLETELY. I THINK THAT'S WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT WITH PRESIDENT PEREZ. I'VE SAID BEFORE THAT IT'S ONE THING FOR THE US TO HAVE A SENSE OF RESPONSIBILITY AND DEDICATION TO THE PROBLEMS OF HER NEIGHBORS TO THE SOUTH, BUT IT'S ANOTHER THING FOR CREATIVE AND IMAGINATIVE LEADERSHIP TO EMERGE FROM THAT REGION WITH A VISION NOT ONLY OF NEW BILATERAL COOPERATION BETWEEN VENEZUELA AND THE US BUT WITH A CONCEPT OF REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND, INDEED, A GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE PROBLEMS OF DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN RIGHTS. AND I THINK, IN PRESIDENT PEREZ AND THE GOVT OF VENEZUELA YOU FIND THAT. I WAS REALLY THRILLED BECAUSE USUALLY COUNTRIES THAT ARE DOING WELL DON'T HAVE MUCH CONCERN

ABOUT COUNTRIES THAT ARE STRUGGLING ALONG. AND THIS IS NOT TRUE OF VENEZUELA. AND I WAS TRYING TO FIGURE OUT THE REASON AND DISCOVERED THAT PERHAPS IN THE PERIOD OF EXILE AND THE PERIOD OF IMPRISONMENT OF PRESIDENT PEREZ AND FOREIGN MINISTER CONSALVI, THAT THERE DEVELOPED A DEDICATION AND A VISION OF WHAT JUSTICE MEANS THAT GIVES THEM A DEPTH OF COMMITMENT TO SOLVING THE PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD, AND ESPECIALLY THE POOR OF THE WORLD, THAT IS EXTREMELY ENCOURAGING AND SOMETHING THAT THE WORLD DESPERATELY NEEDS.

Q. I. MARY HELEN SPOONER FROM DAILY JOURNAL. MY QUESTION HAS TO DO WITH HUMN RIGHTS. I READ RECENTLY THAT AMNESTY INTERNATIONALISTS AT LEAST 17 POLITICAL PRISONERS IN THE US, INCLUDING SEVERAL BLACK CIVIL RIGHTS ACTIVITS. I'D LIKE TO KNOW UNCLASSIFIED

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YOUR VIEW OF THIS- WITH YOUR BACKGROUND IN CIVIL RIGHTS, AND AS A UN AMBASSADOR - AND WHETHER YOU THINK THIS SITUATION HAS ANY EFFECT ON THE CREDIBILITY OF THE US HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY.

A. I THINK THE HUMAN RIGHTS POLICY OF THE US IS BASED ON THE FACT THAT WE ARE NOT OURSELVES PERFECT, AND THAT A NUMBER OF THE CASES THAT HAVE BEEN REFERRED TO ARE CASES THAT OUR JUSTICE DEPT IS ACTIVELY WORKING ON. UNLIKE MANY OF THE COUNTRIES THAT WE DEAL WITH, WE DO HAVE DUE PROCESS AND, WHILE IN MOST INSTANCES THAT WORKS TOWARD THE FULFILLMENT OF JUSTICE, IN SOME INSTANCES THE VERY DUE PROCESS OF OUR SYSTEM MAKES IT DIFFICULT FOR US TO GET JUSTICE. FOR INSTANCE - THE WILMINGTON TEN, I THINK, ARE VERY INNOCENT. AND YET THEY WERE TRIED AND CONVICTED. AND THOUGH THEY HAD ACCESS TO ATTORNEYS, THEIR ATTORNEYS DIDN'T PREPARE THEIR CASE IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT QUALIFIED FOR FEDERAL REVIEW. NOW, THIS IS NOT A MISTAKE IN OUR SYSTEM, IT'S NOT A GOVERNMENTAL DENIAL OF HUMAN RIGHTS. IT'S A HUMAN ERROR THAT IS NOW RESULTING IN THE IMPRISONMENT OF PEOPLE THAT I FEEL ARE QUITE INNOCENT AND WE ARE TRYING TO FIND WAYS TO REMEDY THAT UNJUST SITUATION THRU OUR DEPT OF JUSTICE.

NOW THERE ARE PROBABLY OTHER PEOPLE IN PRISON WHO CONSIDER THEMSELVES POLITICAL PRISONERS; IN FACT, THERE ARE MANY PEOPLE WHO CONSIDER ALL OF THE POOR THAT ARE IN JAILS IN OUR COUNTRY, IN SOME SENSE, POLITICAL PRISONERS. WE DO HAVE A LEGAL AID SOCIETY WHICH IS DESIGNED TO GIVE LEGAL ASSISTANCE TO THE POOR. AND YET, THERE ARE STILL MANY INSTANCES WHERE JUSTICE IS NOT DONE. SO WE DON'T CLAIM TO HAVE A PERFECT SYSTEM, BUT WE ARE CONSTANTLY TRYING TO REVIEW THAT SYSTEM AND REFINE IT SO THAT THE POOREST OF THE POOR CAN HAVE THE SAME RIGHT TO JUSTICE AS PEOPLE WHO ARE EXTREMELY RICH AND ABLE TO HAVE THE BEST ATTORNEYS. AND I THINK WE'RE VERY OPEN ABOUT THAT -- AND WELCOME CRITICISM FROM OTHER COUNTRIES, ESPECIALLY IF IT INCLUDES GUIDANCE AS TO UNCLASSIFIED

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WHAT WE MIGHT DO ABOUT SOME OF THE INEQUITIES IN OUR
POLITICAL SYSTEM.

Q. EXCUSE ME SIR FOR TAKING UP YOUR TIME BUT ILL BE BRIEF. I
WOULD LIKE TO ASK YOU THE FOLLOWING. HOW THAT YOU HAVE ALREADY
OVERCOME THE HURDLE WHICH IS THE PROBLEM OF THE PANAMA
CANAL -- WHAT WILL BE THE NEXT GOAL OF US POLICY TOWARD THIS
CONTINENT -- WILL IT BE THE RE-ESTABLISHMENT OF
RELATIONS WITH CUBA?

A. THAT COULD CERTAINLY BE ONE PART OF IT. BUT I THINK PRIOR TO
THAT, WE HAVE TO DEVELOP AN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT APPROACH TO
THE ENTIRE CARIBBEAN BASIN. I THINK WE HAVE SOME VERY VIABLE
DEMOCRACIES IN THIS REGION THAT ARE SUFFERING A GREAT DEAL AS
A RESULT OF PROBLEMS OF TRADE, BALANCE OF TRADE, HIGH PRICES OF
MANUFACTURED GOODS AND OIL -- AND I WOULD SAY THAT THE NEXT
STEP IN OUR CARIBBEAN POLICY WOULD BE THE ECONOMIC STABILITY OF
THE REGION, WITH SPECIAL ATTENTION BEING GIVEN TO SOME OF THE NEW
NATIONS THAT ARE ONLY RECENTLY COME INTO INDEPENDENCE, THAT LAMOST
CAN'T POSSIBLY SURVIVE WITHOUT GOOD RELATIONSHIPS WITH THEIR
NEIGHBORS. WE ALSO HAVE SOME TRADITIONAL FRIENDS AND SOME VERY
STRONG LEADERS, I THINK, IN THE CARIBBEAN THAT ARE ATTEMPTING
TO DEAL WITH SOME VERY DIFFICULT SITUATIONS. I THINK MAINLY
OF MICHAEL MANLEY OF JAMAICA. AND WE HAVE TO HAVE AN APPROACH
TO SOME OF THOSE KIND OF PROBLEMS -- OF TRADE PROBLEMS, OF
STABILIZATION OF THE PRICE OF SUGAR, OF COFFEE. IN MEXICO,
PRESIDENT LOPEZ PORTILLO WAYS THAT MEXICO WANTS TO EXPORT GOODS
AND NOT PEOPLE. THE KEY TO THAT MAY BE RURAL DEVELOPMENT
IN MEXICO. I THINK ALL OF US IN THIS REGION HAVE A LOT TO LEARN
FROM EACH OTHER AND WE HAVE A LOT TO SHARE WITH EACH OTHER,
AND THAT WILL BE THE BASIS OF OUR NEXT STEP, I THINK, IN CARIBBEAN
POLICY.

LET ME THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR TIME AND YOUR INTEREST AND
YOUR COVERAGE OF OUR VISIT. IT'S NOT OFTEN THAT I CAN SAY I
ENJOY PRESS CONFERENCES, BUT I MUST ADMIT THAT THESE HAVE
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BEEN PARTICULARLY ENJOYABLE, UNLESS
WE HAVE A NASTY QUESTION TO JUST STAY TRUE TO FORM. I THINK
MAYBE WE BETTER SAY "SO LONG" AND "HOPE TO SEE YOU AGAIN",
THANK YOU VERY MUCH.
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